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A NEW OUTLOOK ON CHILDBIRTH

MARCH 1936.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

THE BOGEY OF MATERNAL MORTALITY

AND

A NEW OUTLOOK ON CHILDBIRTH

BY

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Sold by
The Theosophical Press
Wheaton, Illinois

MARCH 1936.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

My thanks are due to those kind friends who have assisted by their helpful suggestions and criticisms.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

As the morning sunshine causes the rosebud to open its petals and give forth its fragrance to the world, so should the experience of childbirth awaken in women the fragrance of Motherhood which perfumes all around.

I know it to be a thrilling experience, but, unfortunately, because of the ignorance surrounding the subject, most women suffer unnecessarily, and the thrill is conspicuous by its absence. No doubt in the future woman will be educated up to a full realization of her Supreme Function and the experience will be very different from that prevailing to-day. Let us anticipate the future and attempt to show where maybe the solution of this pressing problem lies.

As in childhood days the traditional "Bogey" was dispersed by switching on the light, so can this great "Bogey" of Maternal Mortality be dispersed by the application of the light of knowledge.

Medical Science seeks a cure in more and more varied methods of administering palliatives and harmful drugs, many of which appear to be necessary so long as the ills and fear of childbirth exist.

As the result of more than twelve years' experience in Midwifery in most strata of society, the conclusion arrived at is, that before any appreciable change can take place, a new outlook is necessary. During the last three or four years of watching the results of the method set forth in this transaction I have come to believe that some such preventive technique is called for. Those who have tried this method agree that, extraordinary as it may seem, it acts like magic. It has the effect of turning nervous, highly

strung and ill women into radiant creatures with a health and vitality they never thought possible.

This Mothercraft Group exists to make research into these new avenues of approach ; and with these ideas in view it feels that the cure will not be found in a more abstruse doctrinaire of local parts (a fact which has already been discovered by certain Medical Officers of Health who, in spite of increased vigilance in ante-natal care and medical services generally, have had to report an increased death-rate), but in a preventive technique which, though perfect in its detailed application, is superb in its simplicity.

THE "BOGEY" OF MATERNAL MORTALITY

CHAPTER I.

ETHERIC BODY.

On reviewing the field of Maternity work to-day, in order to find a solution to the pressing problem of Maternal Mortality, it seems fairly obvious that the Science of Obstetrics, advanced as it is in one direction, has not yet the knowledge of certain essential factors. While Obstetricians would readily admit that a great act of creation is taking place, they fail to realise that they are dealing with universal forces of which the majority of people are as yet unaware.

While most of us know that we possess a physical body, an emotional nature and a mind, not all of us are aware that we own an etheric body too. It is towards the use of this etheric body as a vehicle of consciousness that we are evolving.

In order the better to understand the importance of the etheric body in midwifery, it is necessary to know something of its structure and function. It appears as a cloud of pale violet-grey or blue-grey matter, faintly luminous and coarse or fine in texture according as its dense counterpart is coarse or fine.* "It is a rapidly-moving mass of subtle physical material which extends beyond the dense physical body to a distance of from four to six inches. It is composed of three layers of varying colour and subtlety, each apparently with its own function yet interdependent upon the others. The outermost and most subtle is an even

* Description given by Miss Phœbe Payne.

flowing band of etheric matter of a delicate opalescent colouring, its outer edge moving in gentle rhythmic waves. At this edge are visible the terminal points of numberless fine, silvery striations which interpenetrate the whole etheric aura. These originate in the etheric spinal column, and in health radiate out freely and evenly at right angles to the surface of the body. In ill-health, or under mental or emotional strain they droop and become tangled and knotted together. On closer observation each striation appears to be a thin tube terminating in a fine mouth which seems to draw vitality from the atomic emanations, and in some subtle manner to connect the etheric body with the emotional body. A further function of these tubes is the elimination of exhausted etheric matter from the physical body.

The middle layer is a filmy mauve-blue band of etheric matter which appears to connect the foregoing layer with the next. The third is of finely woven texture of palest rose-pink etheric matter. Next to the inner edge of this layer lies a very fine etheric skin bearing the same relation to the etheric double as the physical skin bears to the dense physical body. This appears as a fine silvery grey line, which, upon closer observation, is seen to consist of seven layers of cells packed together in honeycomb formation. The three innermost layers appear to act as a bridge upon which the stream of in-going vitality meets and threads its way through the heavier stream of out-going waste matter, both streams being slightly changed in character by the contact. Immediately within the skin is the ribbon composed mainly of the heavier silver grey matter known as Ether 4, which outlines the whole physical body and penetrates it to the depth of about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. The "Double" is the name given to that part of the etheric organism which is contained within the etheric skin. It extends throughout the dense physical body, *providing a counterpart of every physical structure*, and consisting of matter of all types of ether arranged, as a rule, in three layers. The proportion of each type appears to vary according to the nature and function of each organ."

It is important to notice that the dense physical body

and its etheric counterpart vary together as to their quality, so that as we deliberately refine our dense bodies, the etheric double follows suit, without any awareness or additional effort on our part. In fact, the etheric double follows so closely the constitution of the dense body that it is scarcely necessary to study separately its purification and vitalizing. It does not normally serve as a separate vehicle of consciousness, but works synchronously with its dense partner. In fact its function is not to serve as a separate vehicle of mental consciousness, but as a vehicle of *Prana* or specialised Life Force. *IT IS THE VEHICLE OF VITALITY*. The etheric double also acts as a buffer between the mento-emotional and physical bodies.

Let us now consider a very important factor in pregnancy. It is that of the co-operation of the Angelic Brotherhood. They not only assist unseen in the building of the baby body, but are also present at every human birth.* There are, apparently, grades or levels of development in the Angelic Kingdom just as there are in our human kingdom. This fact is known to many, and reference to it can be found in the literature of all ages, but if it is new to you, I would ask you to give it your intelligent consideration before putting it aside because you have not heard of it before. As soon as conception takes place, an elemental is put in charge to build the baby body. Orders are passed down to it from the Agent of those who are in charge of the incarnating forces, as to the type of body required for the incoming Ego. In building the form the elemental takes the etheric matter it needs *from that which it finds ready within the body of the mother*. That is one reason for the necessity of the greatest care, on the part of the mother, during the time the child's body is being formed. *If she supplies nothing but the best and purest materials, the elemental will find itself compelled to choose from these*. We can at once see what a difference this knowledge, were its significance realised and put into practice, would make to the physique of the coming generation. In order to make this applicable and practical

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* See *Miracle of Birth*, by G. Hodson T.P.H.

amidst present-day conditions a definite technique is required. This must obviously begin with the physical body. The ideal arrangement is that woman should be so educated that even if she chooses to transgress the laws of nature in the ordinary way, she will, as soon as she becomes pregnant, automatically know how to regulate her life; or better still, having decided to become a mother, she will wait until she has provided the purest etheric material of which she is capable before allowing conception to occur.

Let us proceed to show how the recognition of the existence of our etheric bodies, and the effort to provide the best etheric material possible, will at the same time dispel the "Bogies" which are mainly responsible for the high maternal death-rate, namely:—Sepsis, the Toxaemias of Pregnancy and, perhaps, the chief "Bogey" because it is the least realised, Fear!

CHAPTER II.

PHYSICAL BODY.

Authorities tell us that Sepsis is responsible for the largest percentage of the deaths.

Here let me quote from a memorandum by the Medical Practitioners' Union, with regard to the facilities for dealing with the increasing Maternal Mortality. "If a 'National Maternity Service' is intended to provide all these facilities and thus cope with the Menace of Maternal Sepsis, the Union will welcome it just so soon as the state can find the many millions necessary. But it does not follow that any material education in Maternal Sepsis would be obtained. *Like everybody else, the mothers of the race carry in their own bodies many millions of germs which are potentially deadly. Surgical cleanliness at the moment of childbirth is but poor defence against their activities. The factor of Maternal Resistance is much more to be relied upon and this has not YET HAD ANY SERIOUS ATTENTION.*" The last sentence seems to show where the root of the evil lies. How is this Sepsis caused? By a toxic condition of the bloodstream. Can this be prevented in pregnancy? Yes! Primarily, by attention to diet. As we have already said in the foregoing chapter, the ideal arrangement is to prepare before the beginning of the nine months' gestation. But, pregnancy having begun, how can sepsis be prevented or eliminated? By a diet of what we shall call purifying foods, because their special value is that they cleanse and revitalise the bloodstream. The principle acid-binding or alkaline elements necessary for the growth of the human body, and the performance of its physiological functions, are potassium, sodium, calcium, magnesium, iron, copper, manganese, zinc, nickel, aluminium, and a few others of lesser importance. These chemicals, or mineral salts, compose in

varying quantities a little over one fourth part of our bodies; the rest is water. Therefore, to obtain the desired result the foods which contain them should be eaten. All these essential elements are to be found in raw salads, fresh and dried fruits, vegetables and their juices, nuts, raisins, wholemeal bread, rye-vita, milk, eggs and cheese. For instance, it has been estimated that the calcium requirements of the average adult is about 200 grains per day. This requirement must naturally increase in maternity, especially during the last three months of pregnancy, when the foetus is rapidly growing. A daily supply of green-leaf vegetables in the form of salads is, therefore, absolutely necessary, not only to ensure the normal growth of the unborn child, but also an easy parturition.

You may, at this point, say that you have always understood that meat and fish were necessary because of their strengthening properties. May I bring to your notice the fact that the animals which you eat are themselves non-flesh eaters, and only possess those strengthening properties because of the grass, grain or oats on which they are fed. So why take your vitamins second-hand and at this time put upon your bodies the added strain of dealing with decomposed flesh, which is not only foreign to it, but, because of faulty elimination, produces a toxic condition of the blood stream and tissues. The same considerations apply to fish, the oil of which we continually see advertised as containing large quantities of certain vitamins, again because of the different variety of sea-weed and green stuff on which fish live in the sea. A proper understanding of this subject is important to the pregnant woman, because such a diet, besides purifying both the dense physical and etheric bodies, also places her in a position of vital resistance to disease. Sepsis, heart-burn, indigestion, kidney troubles and the other so-called common ailments of pregnancy are unknown to her. On the contrary, she knows a health and vitality she never thought possible.

From a study of this question of vitality we cannot fail to recognise, that, quite apart from temperature, sun-

light is one of the most important factors in the attainment and preservation of perfect health, a factor for the absence of which nothing else can entirely compensate. The sun is the greatest reservoir of the electro-magnetic and vital forces of our system and it pours out abundantly streams of life-giving energy. These are taken in by the etheric doubles of all minerals, vegetables, animals and man, and are transmuted into the various life-energies needed by each entity. It is a recognised fact that the butter from those countries, such as New Zealand and Australia, where the cows live on grass out of doors in the sunshine all the year round, is much better in vitamin content, as it is called, than that obtained from the cows in those countries where, in winter, they have to be kept indoors and artificially fed. The etheric doubles, being the organs of vitality, draw in, specialise and distribute these forces over their physical counterparts. Since this vitality is poured forth not only upon the physical world, but upon the subtle worlds as well, it is evident that, when in other respects satisfactory conditions are present, emotion, intellect and spirituality will be at their best under clear skies and with the inestimable aid of the sun. Hence the reason for the pregnant woman knowing why it is important to get out into the sunshine and open spaces, or, in winter in this country, of being able to bask in artificial sunlight in cultured surroundings.

Chapter III.

MIND AND EMOTIONS.

It is said that "Right Thinking and Right Feeling produce Right Action." How true this is when applied to our present subject. The use of constructive thinking plays an important part in making the experience of childbirth a thrilling one. It is essential to-day that the pregnant woman shall be taught that the use of constructive thinking on the right lines has the effect of counteracting the wrong thought-form which has become established to an overwhelming degree in the sub-conscious mind of the race, that childbirth is a terrible thing to experience, a mistaken notion which is causing so much panic in the minds of young mothers-to-be at the present time. This idea has been passed down to us from mediaeval times, when women squeezed their bodies into tight inhuman garments. If you have studied the iron stays of Elizabethan days, you will readily agree that childbirth under those circumstances must have been difficult, and no doubt the lack of medical knowledge at the time combined to make it more so. Now, after many generations, it has become an established thought that it has always been so and will always be so. It is one of the very good illustrations of the potency of auto-suggestion.

The native woman in Africa, however, who has no such thought in her sub-conscious mind, has her baby and gets on with the day's work as though it were an ordinary event in the day's routine. In comparing the racial types we find that the native woman leads a very simple, natural life, unhampered by the results of many centuries of a more and more complicated manner of living. She lives very close to nature and is therefore, to a large extent, free of the complexes set up by artificial conditions; also the rough diet of the primitive state of life has a greater

vitaminic force than the elaborate dishes of our modern chef.

Constructive thinking is of the greatest importance in assisting the elemental who is at work building the baby body, for unless he is charged with some special development, such as unusual beauty or the reverse, the principle agent at work in this direction will be the thought of the mother, and the thought-forms which float around her.

Right Feeling is no less important. Fear is an emotion which inhibits action, and is the root cause of the long, terrifying labours of which we hear so much. It works in this way. The gestation period over, the moment arrives when the forces which operate to assist the child into the world, are set in motion. In nine cases out of ten, unless the mother-to-be has been specially prepared beforehand, the operation of these forces seems to awake in her this great sub-conscious fear, as well as the conscious fear of all the things which she has heard about childbirth. This fear communicates itself through the etheric centres to the sympathetic nervous centres which control the muscles of the uterus, or womb, and causes the cervical muscles to become rigid instead of expanding, as they should, in order to permit the birth of the child. At the same time, the crosswise bands of muscle situated in the upper half of the uterus proceed with their work of strong contraction, trying to draw up the cervix over the child's head; but the fear of the mother impinging on the etheric centres makes this impossible until, after many hours or days, she is given an anaesthetic which releases the tension, and the child is born. She feels she has been through a terrible experience and though this may be forgotten in the joy of seeing her babe, nevertheless it leaves an imprint on her sub-conscious mind; whereas, if she had been prepared by right thinking and right feeling, the fear of the so-called pains of childbirth would have been eliminated. Pain occurs at the point where the etheric emanations have formed an effective block to vital circulation, as I have just described in the case of fear, and the strain of the dammed-up energy behind the block brings about in the dense physical body a certain

nervous pressure to which we have given the name of pain. It is also an established medical fact that no pain nerves, as such, exist in the uterus or womb, a fact which has scarcely been realised by the women of to-day. This has been admirably dealt with by Dr. Grantley Dick Reid, M.D., in his book called "Natural Childbirth."

So we see that, in attempting to provide the best and purest etheric material for the baby-body being formed, we can eliminate most of the present-day difficulties of pregnancy, and, instead, ensure that it shall be the most wonderful experience that any woman can have, whatever her age when it happens. When she realises that she is performing her supreme function, one which will give her the opportunity of expanding and evolving her consciousness more easily than in any other way, because she is the focus of Universal Forces which are at her disposal, she will, at the supreme moment of childbirth, be able to relax her physical body and receive the child with a joy in the experience of which fear will find no place.

Chapter IV.

EDUCATION.

It has been said, "to educate a man is to form an individual who leaves nothing behind him, to educate a woman is to form future generations." This problem is in the hands of Woman herself. She needs the right kind of education, one that while it includes science, history and mathematics, etc., will also include a study of herself, the functions of her body and her mission in the world as a woman. So many have told me that had they only known the right things to do during pregnancy they would never have done the things which cause so much trouble. The *one* thing about which a woman should know so much, of *that* is she left in complete ignorance. Upon women as mothers of the race devolves the duty of the upbringing and welfare of the child; this will necessitate the education of future mothers on the right lines. We all recognise that a properly balanced diet for the mind is as important as for the body. Education should include the training of the physical body, the emotions, the mind and the developing of the intuition. Physique and energy can be greatly improved by a well-regulated diet. The physical body should be trained to be radiant and light. Those exercises and rhythmic movements which serve to enhance its lightness rather than increase its denseness should be taught. Most of the exercises taught at the present time serve to cultivate that part of the body which responds to the lunar or earthly forces, thereby increasing the density of the physical organism, instead of teaching it to respond to the lighter and more potent solar forces, of which more is now becoming known. The emotions should be trained by the teachings of history with its lessons of courage and great inspiration, and by the realisation that physically

we are what our forefathers have made us, so are the future generations our responsibility.

The whole of the education of a girl should lead her to recognise the glory of true home-life, its paramount importance both to individual and national well-being, and the unique privilege attached to those who minister to the very heart of life. Girls and young women should be trained to be efficient mothers, with all that contributes to a home's well-being forming an integral part of their education.

Chapter V.

EFFECT ON CHILD.

Let us consider this new outlook on childbirth from the babies' point of view. When the right kinds of food are eaten no baby grows too big to be born. As I have already pointed out in a previous chapter, 75% of our bodies is composed of water, and the rest of a few mineral salts; it will, therefore, be readily understood that too high a percentage of fats, cereals, proteins and starches are not only unnecessary but harmful during pregnancy. Afterwards they can be increased, if necessary, in correct proportions to ensure the mother's milk containing the necessary nourishment to enable the child to grow; and here let me mention the fact, which experience has taught us, that a woman who has lived on such a diet during pregnancy is much more likely to have the quantity of nourshing milk required than her sister who has lived on the toxin-forming foods. The one has a vital healthy blood stream, the other the opposite, and, as the milk supply depends on the condition of the blood, the results will be obvious. Such a diet will also ensure the child having a vital and healthy physical body.

The next point to note is that the method I have outlined eliminates the possibility of damage or shock to the baby, becasue the use of instruments becomes unnecessary. If women could only realise the difference between old and new methods, they would never hesitate in choosing which to adopt. Unfortunately, so many of the difficulties have come to be looked upon as natural and inevitable to childbirth instead of the reverse.

By relaxation properly practised, and there is an easily understood method available, the muscles of the parts concerned, being healthy and elastic, do their work well and quickly so that the infant glides into the world

unharmed by having to bear the strain of being ceaselessly forced by the strong contractions of the uterus against an iron band of muscle, caused by the tense condition of the mother, and in a prolonged labour a prevalent cause of still-birth. Another result of these methods is the avoidance of perineal tears, which so often, because of the unhealthy condition of the mother, provides an ideal home for septic germs. Nor are drugs or anaesthetics necessary; on the contrary; the mother-to-be is in full command of herself and of what is happening, and never in the position of begging for the relief which so many women find degrading. With these methods no baby takes more than four or five hours to be born, and many take a good deal less. Do not let this short time disturb you! There is always, I find, plenty of warning to prepare for the event.

The only occasion when the much-performed Caesarean section may be necessary is where, as a result of the ignorance of our forebears some few women are, unfortunately, malformed in their bony structure. But if they practice the methods described they will come through such an operation in such a satisfactory manner as will cause their surgeon a good deal of surprise.

Chapter VI.

HEALTH AND THE ETHERIC BODY.

From the foregoing considerations we are led to realise that the etheric body has a large part to play in the preservation of vital health, because the physical body alone could never call forth a process of self-healing; it is in the etheric organism that the process is kindled. We are therefore led to recognise that health is a condition which largely has its origin in the etheric. Healing must therefore consist in a treatment of the etheric organism. That is probably the reason why Homeopathic remedies act so effectively and quickly when the right remedy has been applied. The method of preparation of these remedies is a step by step process of dilution and addition of energy by violent shaking, resulting in extreme dispersion of the particles, which liberates the etheric activity of the drug so that it acts directly on the etheric body.

There are roughly speaking four types of human etheric bodies corresponding to the classical elements, earth, air, fire and water, in other words according to the predominant characteristics of the individual. All types respond to deep-breathing exercises, sunlight, vital food and relaxation; by learning to keep the etheric body in a free-flowing condition by right thinking, feeling and living, we can attain a measure of health such as few people at present experience. Exercises, deep breathing and relaxation should be advised by an expert who understands the special kind suited to each type of etheric body. For instance, if a heavy phlegmatic person is given the usual type of full deep-breathing exercises with relaxation it will only increase his or her difficulty.

Doctors and nurses can greatly assist in this by making

a study of the etheric organism and the way it responds to vital magnetic treatment.* It is unfortunate that this most important knowledge is not yet to be found in current medical text-books and no amount of hospital training will supply it. Each must at present find it for himself for only in such a way is it of value to the individual.

As all nervous diseases, digestive troubles and sleeplessness etc., imply a jangled condition of the etheric double, and as these are in the ordinary way the usual common complaints of pregnancy, it will be plainly seen how the conscious recognition of our etheric bodies has a great part to play not only in eliminating this great "Bogey" of Maternal Mortality, but also in building vital physical bodies. This can be achieved by rich and poor alike. It entails no complicated manner of living but rather one of great simplicity.

* See *Vital Magnetic Healing*, by A. E. Gardner. T.P.H.

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